A CHARGE

Delivered at the

ORDINATION

OF THE

Rev. Mr. *William Dowars*,

In *Little Ayliffe-ſtreet, Gooodmans-Fields*;
on *Thurſday, September* 15, 1757,

BY THE

Rev. Mr. *CHARLES SKELTON.*

We beſeech you, Brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admoniſh you; and to eſteem them very highly in Love for their Works ſake. And be at Peace among yourſelves, 1 Theſſ. v. 12, 13.

Publiſhed at the Requeſt of the Church, and at the Deſire of ſeveral who heard it.

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A

CHARGE, &c.

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BRETHREN,

AS the Part allotted me is to addreſs myſelf to you, in the Cloſe of the preſent Solemnity; I ſhall now drop a few Hints, reſpecting your Behaviour to your Miniſter, and to each other, as Members of a Church of *Chriſt*. I, therefore, beg your moſt ſerious Attention to that Part of GOD's Word, which is written by the Apoſtle *Paul*, to the Church of the *Theſſalonians*, 1 Ep. Ch. v. Ver. 12, 13.

We beſeech you, Brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admoniſh you; and to eſteem them very highly in Love for their Works ſake. And be at Peace among yourſelves.

From theſe Words, I ſhall briefly ſpeak to the following Particulars:

1*ſt*, The Duty of a Paſtor towards his People.

2*dly*, The Duty of a Church to their Miniſter.

3*dly*, The Peoples Duty to each other. And

4*thly*, Sum up the Whole with a Word of Application.

1*ſt*, As to the Duty of a Paſtor towards his Flock.

This Point has been already fully and judiciouſly treated of; and I am conſcious that I have nothing to offer, which can make any Amendment; yet, I hope, I ſhall ſtand excuſed, if, by Way of ſtirring up the Affections, and exerting the Love of the Members of this Church to their Miniſter, I juſt hint the following Particulars, which are requiſite to that arduous Employ. The Duty of a Paſtor towards his People is comprized in the following Particulars, as hinted by the Apoſtle in the Words

I juſt

I have juſt read to you, namely, to *labour*, to *admoniſh*, and to *rule*.

It is a Paſtor's Duty to labour; the Miniſters of *Chriſt* are not to be Loiterers, but Labourers; they are called Labourers, 1 *Cor.* iii. 9. and the miniſterial Work, when rightly performed, is a laborious Work. What with privately ſtudying GOD's Word, and preaching the ſame publicly, in Seaſon, and out of Seaſon; lifting up their Voice like a Trumpet; alarming drouſy Sinners; comforting mourning Souls; and rejoicing the Hearts of GOD's dear Children, who are enabled to act Faith upon *Jeſus*; and not only labouring with, and for the Good of precious Souls, but alſo labouring for them before the *Lord*; wreſtling with GOD by fervent Prayer, that the Word may have free Courſe among them, and be powerfully bleſſed to them: From theſe, and many other Particulars that might be mentioned, you will, I believe, allow, my Brethren, that a Miniſter's Work is a laborious Work.

But conſider again; another Branch of a Paſtor's Duty towards his People, is to admoniſh, by reproving of Sins committed, and not ſuffering Sin upon the Head of any Perſon, without admoniſhing them of the Hurt and Injury they will

ſuſtain thereby; beſeeching them to forſake every Evil, and to flee from all Sin, and likewiſe exhorting them to the faithful Diſcharge of every Duty; to live under the Enjoyment of every Goſpel-Privilege, and, in all Things, to walk worthy of the Vocation of the Goſpel of Holineſs, whereunto they are called, inaſmuch as Sins of Omiſſion precede, ſo they alſo tend to bring on the Sins of Commiſſion: Now all this requires a Paſtor to be wiſe, diſcreet, and blameleſs towards his People.

The laſt Part of a Paſtor's Duty, which I ſhall mention, is, to rule; not magiſterially, much leſs tyrannically, but in Love and Meekneſs; not as being Lords over GOD's Heritage, but being Enſamples to the Flock; uſing the Power *Chriſt* has given him, ſuch as a Shepherd over the Flock, to guide and conduct it; as the Head of that natural Body over its Members, to influence and quicken them; and as the Father of a Family has over the Houſhold, to take Care of and provide for it.

Now, my Brethren in *Chriſt*, weigh and conſider theſe Things, (and I pray the dear *Lord Jeſus*, the Head of his Church, to impreſs them deeply upon your Minds) that you may be led to the mutual Dicharge of that Duty which

which lieth upon you; which was the 2*d* Point I propoſed to conſider.

The Duty of the Members of a Church towards their Paſtor, is to know him. *Know them that labour among you*, ſaith the Apoſtle. How are you to know your Paſtor? Take Knowledge of his miniſterial Gifts and private Converſation.

As to the 1ſt, that you may know and perceive that your Souls thrive and proſper under his Miniſtry: as to his private Converſation, know him, ſo as to be edified and inſtructed thereby, in the Things that make for your Peace and Comfort. Know your Miniſter in ſuch Sort as to approve his Doctrine, as it is the Truth in *Jeſus*, and reliſh his good Converſation, as being ſuch as becometh the Goſpel of *Chriſt*: Know him ſo as to imitate him, and be the Followers of him in every pious Example in which he follows *Chriſt*; and you will undoubtedly be concerned ſo to know him as to contribute chearfully and generouſly towards his Maintenance and Support; for as it his Employ to ſow to you ſpiritual Things, it may juſtly be expected that he reap your carnal Things, ſo is it ordained that they which preach the Goſpel, ſhould live of the Goſpel.

2dly,

2dly, Eſteem him very highly in Love for his Work's ſake, paying Honour to his Office; it being an Office of Power, which the Church, under *Chriſt*, intruſts him with; for GOD has put Honour upon him, by given him hidden Treaſure in his earthen Veſſel. And, my Brethren, if his Word is bleſſed, and made a Word of Power, Comfort and Conſolation to your Souls, ye cannot, ye will not withold the Honour that is due to him; and ye will eſteem him highly in Love for his Work's ſake; and this Eſteem will carry out your Souls in fervent Prayer: As you bear him upon your Hearts with Love, ſo will ye preſent him continually upon your Arms of Faith before the Throne of GOD, and this with all Conſtancy and Fervency. But I go on to

The 3*d* Particular, which was, to ſpeak to the People's Duty to each other, from the Apoſtle's Advice: *Be at Peace among yourſelves.*

It is here ſuppoſed, that the Members of *Chriſt*'s Church are Subjects of the Prince of Peace; and that they can feelingly ſay, *Chriſt* is our Peace! and therefore the Peace of GOD, which paſſeth all Underſtanding, rules their Hearts; and that they are peaceable People,

or

or Peace-makers, and therefore are *the Bleſſed of the Lord.* You are here exhorted, my Brethren, to live and act under the ſweet Influence of Peace and Holineſs one towards another; Peace and Holineſs are inſeparably connected by the Apoſtle; follow Peace with all Men, and Holineſs, without which no Man ſhall ſee the *Lord.* O let me charge and beſeech you to beware of Contention and Strife among yourſelves; only contend earneſtly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints; and ſtrive together for the Hope of the Goſpel; and maintain the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace; for ye are hereunto called. Are ye Members of *Jeſus?* live as Members of the loving, lowly, peaceable *Lord.* Are ye in Church-Fellowſhip, and ſo Members one of another? live peaceably together; watch againſt every Thing which may diſturb or deſtroy your Love and Peace; think ye are called with an holy and heavenly Calling. O that it may be ſaid of you alſo, See how theſe Chriſtians live peaceably, with Love to each other! Reflect how you will diſturb your Miniſter's Mind, if Strifes and Contention creep in among you; how you will wound and injure each other's Souls; how you will hereby bring Diſhonour upon your moſt holy Profeſſion, ſo as to give the Enemy an Occaſion to triumph; and, above all,

all, how you will provoke our dear and loving *Saviour* to withold his Bleſſing from you as a Church, and to hide away the Comforts of his Love, and the Light of his Countenance from you, as Individuals. But I hope and earneſtly pray it will be otherwiſe; and that, as you hope and expect to join the Bleſſed in the peaceful Realms above, ye will ſtrive to imitate them here below, by being all of one Mind, and being at Peace among yourſelves. A ſhort Application of Addreſs, and I have done.

You, my dear Brother and Fellow-Labourer, who have been now publicly called and ſolemnly appointed to labour, admoniſh and rule among, and over this Part of the *Lord*'s Heritage.

I heartily wiſh you good Speed in the Name of the *Lord Jeſus*; may your Labours in the *Lord* be bleſſed; may the Love of the *Lord Jeſus* be warm in your Heart; and may it be your happy Exerciſe to ſet him forth in all his Offices, as *altogether lovely*. I wiſh you happily to experience all your Labours animated and ſweetned with Love, even the Love of *Jeſus*, and Love to your Flock; and that you may be the happy Inſtrument of feeding the Souls committed to your Care, with the true, ſubſtantial, Soul-nouriſhing

riſhing Bread of Life, and not with the empty, unſatisfying Huſks of Philoſophy and vain Deceits. Go on and proſper, and may the *Lord* ſtrengthen and bleſs you in all your Words, and Works, and Ways.

You, my Friends and Brethren in *Chriſt*, the Church in this Place, you have known for ſome Time what it is to be as Sheep without a Shepherd, but now the *Lord* in his Providence has (I truſt, in anſwer to Prayer) ſent the Rev. Mr. *Dowars*, whom you have heard with Approbation, as to his Gifts and good Converſation in *Chriſt*; therefore you have this Day ſet him apart to watch over you in the *Lord*; to preach the Word, and adminiſter the Sacraments as inſtituted by *Jeſus Chriſt*: Your Eyes ſee your Teacher, I charge you in the Name of the *Lord* that ye know, love, honour and eſteem him in your Hearts and Behaviour; the Particulars of which I have already ſpoken to, and may you be mutually bleſſed to ſtrengthen each other's Hands in the *Lord*; may you be the Joy of your Miniſter's Heart now, and his Crown of Rejoicing in the great Day of the *Lord*.

I commend you to GOD, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up. May he confirm and eſtabliſh you in all Love, both

both to GOD, your Miniſter, and to each other; and that ye may abound in every good Word and Work, and that your Profiting and Peace may appear unto all, ſo that he that ſoweth, and you that reap, may rejoice together here; and may meet to praiſe the Riches of Redeeming Grace, and the Myſteries of dying Love in the Realms of Bliſs and Glory, to the Praiſe of GOD the FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT. *Amen.*

F I N I S.